



# Opening Doors, Changing Lives

DIVISION OF MENTAL RETARDATION SERVICES

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## Valued Day Project

### Tyler Shares His Experience

By Sandra Clamp

After reflecting on a recent experience I had with Tyler and his support staff, I felt everyone should hear about our time together.

Let me preface by saying there were road blocks coming at us right and left on 4/5, our planned day together. But my compliments to Sharon and Zietuni for patiently working through each until our ultimate departure from the Kramer Center to Shelby Farms.

I'm not sure of a better way to describe this afternoon than to paint you a picture. It's not Kodak but I'll try to capture the wonder of the event! ...

We agreed to go to Shelby Farms so Tyler could experience touching and smelling and looking at horses.

Prior to getting together, Sharon asked Tyler's mom about any concerns with him going to hang out with the horses. She learned that Tyler has spent a lot of time with them at home.

Still we were a bit skeptical that Tyler might not be so thrilled, especially since we're not usually with him at home. At the Kramer Center, Sharon asked Tyler if he still wanted to go to be with the horses.

For the first time, I witnessed Tyler give Sharon a quick nod in the yes position, smiling at her. A definite "yes"!!! and we were off.



As soon as Zietuni parked the van, Tyler was climbing out! He rushed to the fence where you could see the horses. Smiling and rushing over, excitement just poured from him.

After getting Shelby Farms to approve visiting with the horses instead of riding, we walked over to one of the horses. Tyler looked at the horse and immediately hoisted his leg up, as if to climb aboard.

We were mesmerized. He was so intent on riding that we re-stated our plans and asked for a horse that Tyler could ride. Then the difficult part—waiting while a horse returned from another ride. Tyler was ready to go, just laughing with excitement.

After explaining the delay, we walked around meeting some of the Farm help. A young cowboy walked up and

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## Status Conference Held on Independent Support Coordination

A status conference in the matter of *People First of Tennessee et al. v. Clover Bottom Developmental Center, et al.* was held on May 5, 2000. Counsel for all parties and the Quality Review Panel were present for this follow-up status conference regarding independent support coordination services.

As previously requested by the Court, the defendants gave a presentation regarding the efforts to prioritize recommendations from the reports on independent support coordination previously filed.

Barb Brent, Deputy Commissioner of Mental Retardation Services, gave a report on the method used to receive input from the Quality Review Panel, the parties and other stakeholders and the defendants' process of prioritization.

As referenced in the summary presented by Ms. Brent, some recommendations will be addressed within sixty days. Other recommendations have been prioritized to be addressed by stakeholder workgroups.

Rick Campbell, Deputy Director, Commission on Compliance, also gave a presentation on the process to be used by the defendants to address the recommendations in the reports.

Workgroups have been established to address prioritized recommendations. Time frames and action steps will be set by each workgroup within thirty days. The defendants will be involved in the workgroups and each workgroup will also include stakeholders.

Concerns and issues were raised and the parties agreed to address them.

The next status conference is a follow-up status conference regarding protection from harm set for Friday, June 16, 2000, at 9:00 a.m.

## WEB POSTINGS

<http://www.state.tn.us/mental2/>

Announcements, draft policies, final policies and information bulletins all appear on our Web site. Activities included this past month are:

### INFORMATION BULLETINS

BULLETIN NUMBER	BULLETIN SUBJECT	DATE ISSUED
00-05	ISC Access to Information	5/4/00
00-06	ISCs & the Provision of Direct Support Services	5/4/00
00-07	Transportation Resources	5/2/00

## Tyler's Experience Continued

(Continued from front page.)

introduced himself. Tyler smiled. The boy asked Tyler if he was excited. Tyler gave a quick nod "yes". Tyler's understanding and obvious excitement was incredible.

Soon a tame horse returned and we were ready to blaze the trail. Tyler hurried to the fence again. There would be no waiting this time! The cowboy assisted Tyler with fitting a riding helmet. The cowboy introduced us to Bud Light—Tyler's horse for the afternoon. Tyler showed no fear, and he again hoisted his leg up, hopping to the saddle.



### Opening Doors, Changing Lives A publication of the Division of Mental Retardation Services

Don Sundquist, Governor  
John Ferguson, Commissioner  
Finance and Administration  
Barbara Brent, Deputy  
Commissioner, DMR Services

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Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation, Authorization No. 339315, 10,000 copies, October 1998. This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$.07 per copy.

Tyler sat up tall and grabbed on to the saddle horn, shaking his chest forward and back, as if to say "giddy up." It was truly a beautiful sight! Sharon was amazed at Tyler's response, saying that they would have to go riding again. I agreed. Tyler definitely agreed!

The glow in Tyler's eyes and the smiles on Sharon's face made this trip worth every delay—Worth every road block—Worth every concern—Worth every penny—Worth every dusty step. Tyler was happy! Tyler is a cowboy!

Thank you Sharon! Thank you Zietuni! Thank you to SRVS! Tyler experienced something we didn't know brought him such thrill, and we experienced the awesome feeling of making it happen for him.

I regret that I didn't have a camera that day. But I will never forget the picture of Tyler as the cowboy. It was truly a Kodak moment!!!

Hat's Off to Tyler! Yee Haw!!!

## Delta Child Care Resource Center Funded

The Tennessee Delta Child Care Resource Center has been funded through the collaborative efforts of the Department of Health, the Department of Human Services, and Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Council.

The center will include a lending library with teaching aids (books, magazines, and adaptive toys and equipment). Containers stocked with thematic toys, games, manipulative, books, props for creative play, etc. will be available for checkout.

Each "prop box" will include suggestions for adapting the material for various special needs and developmental levels, and will be accompanied by a letter to parents giving an overview of the theme covered, along with suggestions for reinforcing and extending the learning activities at home.

The center will serve Fayette, Lauderdale, Shelby, and Tipton Counties. For more information call Freda Neely at (901) 333-6051.

### Central and Regional Information Specialists

PERSON	LOCATION	PHONE NUMBER	FAX NUMBER
Larry Grimes	Central Office-Nashville	(615)532-6545	(615)532-9940
Kay Carlton	Memphis Regional Office	(901)685-3901 Ext.134	(901)685-3919
Elizabeth Gerlock	Nashville Regional Office	(615)231-5033	(615)231-5150
Fred Coe	Knoxville Regional Office	(865)588-0508 Ext.108	(865)594-5180

### Toll Free Lines For Complaints or Information, Call

Central Office-Nashville	1-800-535-9725
Memphis Regional Office	1-800-308-2586
Nashville Regional Office	1-800-654-4839
Knoxville Regional Office	1-888-310-4613

### Web Site

Commission on Compliance/  
Division of Mental Retardation  
Services Web Site:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/mental2/>

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